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Boundary Tastes at Work: The Gendered Effect of Authority Positions in the Workplace on Taste in Clothing and Food

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Abstract

In this article, we test three hypotheses about the gendered effect of authority positions in the workplace on tastes in the areas of food and clothing. We use the micro-interactionist model of Randall Collins to formulate new hypotheses on the development of aesthetic and practical taste patterns, as described by Pierre Bourdieu. This leads to the following hypotheses: (1) people in superordinate positions will develop more aesthetic tastes; (2) men in subordinate positions will develop more practical tastes; and (3) women in subordinate positions will develop more aesthetic tastes. Our results show that there is a significant effect of being in a superordinate position on food preferences but not on clothing preferences. Among people in subordinate positions, women score higher than men on a fashion taste in clothing, lower on practical taste in clothing, and lower on a conventional taste in food.

Keywords

food preferences, clothing preferences, gender, authority positions

Introduction

Ever since the "cultural turn" in social sciences, the study of social stratification has embraced the areas of consumption and lifestyle in their research programs. Economic differences are no longer seen as a sufficient paradigm to analyze the development of stratified groups in society. Other cultural (or symbolic) resources have to be taken into account as well (Ray and Sayer 1999). This emphasis on cultural resources is heavily influenced by Pierre Bourdieu (1973, 1984), who provided an elaborate discussion of how different lifestyles are constitutive for the reproduction of social classes in society. Bourdieu described taste patterns as part of an incorporated habitus that is formed during early socialization and dependent on the social position of the family. These taste patterns differentiate the lifestyles of social classes and together with economic capital, they constitute social stratification. This has become a very influential research paradigm in social sciences, which emphasizes the role of class-based socialization processes to explain the development of different taste patterns.

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However, some authors have argued that the development of specific taste patterns is not only dependent on a fixed habitus. Class-based experiences and interactions in later life can be influential as well (Collins 2004; Halle 1984; Kane 2004; Vallas 2001). Randall Collins (1988, 1992, 2004) emphasized workplace interactions and differential experiences on the power dimension as crucial factors to explain the development of lifestyle patterns. Interactions that involve giving and taking orders are particularly relevant in this respect. In addition, the difference between (male) backstage work and (female) frontstage work will constitute a gender difference in taste patterns. These experiential factors have rarely been taken into account to explain the stratification of taste preference (for an exception, Lizardo 2011). However, Collins formulated some very general propositions from a micro-sociological approach on the gendered effect of authority positions on lifestyle preferences that need further verification.

In this article, we test whether these propositions hold when they are tested using population data. We focus on boundary tastes in clothing and food because these are traditionally seen as highly symbolic areas that express boundaries between social groups in everyday life (Bourdieu 1984; Collins 2004; Pachucki, Pendergrass, and Lamont 2007; Warde 1997; Warde, Martens, and Olsen 1999). In the next section, we discuss how taste patterns in food and clothing can function as boundary tastes. Next, we discuss the experiential stratification model of Collins and his hypotheses on the influence of occupational experiences on taste patterns.

Theoretical Background

Pierre Bourdieu: The Aesthetic versus the Practical Disposition

The work of Pierre Bourdieu is of particular significance in the sociological debate on the relationship between taste patterns and social positions. Based on empirical survey data collected in Paris (between 1963 and 1968), he convincingly argued for the existence of a structural homology between the lifestyle space (which includes areas as diverse as culture, sport, eating, clothing, and interior design) and the social space, which constitutes the class position of an individual in society (Bourdieu 1984). The class position of an individual is defined by the amount of economic and cultural capital they possess, and this social position gives rise to class-specific taste patterns. Bourdieu placed two distinct taste patterns at opposite extremes of the social space: the taste of necessity of the working class and the aesthetic taste of the upper classes. A taste of necessity is developed in conditions where there is a lack of economic capital (which results in a taste for cheaper products) and cultural capital (which results in a stronger adherence to group conformity). The aesthetic taste pattern is developed in conditions where there is an abundance of economic capital (which results in a taste for luxurious products with no direct practical use) and cultural capital (which results in an emphasis on aesthetics).

These two taste patterns constitute "boundary tastes" because they are developed in opposition to each other, which makes them irreconcilable. For the taste of necessity, functionality is the primary criterion of evaluation for objects and practices, which leads to a rejection of highbrow cultural objects or consumer products that have no direct functional use. The main goal is to build up the most comfortable life possible with the available economic and cultural capital, with no room for aesthetic criteria. For the aesthetic taste pattern, aesthetic criteria are the primary way of evaluating objects and practices and this goes hand in hand with a condescending attitude toward cheap and mass-produced objects that only have a practical function. Bourdieu (1987) placed these opposing dispositions at the extreme ends of the class structure, with a middle class that floats between the two.

To understand the genesis of these two taste patterns, Bourdieu introduced the sociopsychological concept of habitus. This is a "practice unifying and practice generating set of dispositions," adjusted to the objective conditions where a person grows up. It is "practice unifying"

because the same general taste patterns are developed in all areas of everyday life, and it is "practice generating" because these general schemes generate everyday practices and perceptions. An important point for Bourdieu was that the habitus is not the result of conscious learning processes. These dispositions are physically incorporated (embodied), which makes the body the primary site where the deepest dispositions of the habitus manifest themselves (Bourdieu 1977). Therefore, food and clothing are exemplary areas where boundary tastes are developed because they are closely related to the practical use of the body in everyday life (Bourdieu 1984). Bourdieu discussed food and clothing preferences at length to highlight the opposition between the taste of necessity of the working class and the aesthetic taste pattern of the upper class.

The working class will positively evaluate bodily strength because this is a practical trait for males who have to perform manual labor (Bourdieu 1984). Therefore, they will put great emphasis on the quantity of a meal and they will develop an appetite for heavier and fatter foods, because they are seen as "strong and strong making" products. The lack of economic capital also excludes the working class from experimenting with food, which leads to a preference toward "normal" and "down to earth" food with no room for fancy or exotic products.

In the area of clothing, the working class has a very straightforward functional taste as well, where "they seek value for their money and choose what will last" (Bourdieu 1984:199). Again, this stylistic preference is linked to ideas about the body, which has to be ready for physical labor. Clothing should be solid and it should not be a problem to get these clothes dirty. Furthermore, they will not choose deviant styles in clothing because there is a strong emphasis on group conformity, especially among working-class men (Bourdieu 1984; Collins 1992; Halle 1984).

The upper classes, however, will emphasize the shape and other aesthetic qualities of the body. In the area of food, this leads to a preference for healthier and lighter food products. Furthermore, their economic capital allows for a more luxurious taste, where refined and novel tastes in food are highly valued (Bourdieu 1984). In the area of clothing, a fashionable taste is seen as the symbolic means *par excellence* to show off the aesthetic disposition in everyday life. The principle of form over function can be celebrated in this area, as the most important fashionable status items have no, or only a minimal, functional use (jewelry, high heels, watches, ties, etc.). Thus, the upper classes will develop a preference for "seeming over being," which means that the perception of others is the primary landmark for choices in clothing.

Critical Reception of Bourdieu's Reproduction Model

For Bourdieu, class-based taste preferences emanate from the objective circumstances of different class positions, which are incorporated into a habitus that leads to an acceptance of and identification with these class positions. However, although Bourdieu described these dispositions as being determined by socialization processes in the family of origin, they are not completely fixed throughout the life course. They always need to be enacted in social interaction situations to function as cultural capital. As Douglas B. Holt (1997) suggested, when we look at Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital, we can distinguish between the virtual forms and field-specific forms of cultural capital. The virtual form relates to the habitus and can be seen as a transposable set of dispositions that is acquired in the family of origin and which can be applied in different contexts. However, this virtual set of dispositions does not always come to the forefront: it has to be functional in the specific field where an individual is active. This means that cultural capital has to be activated in specific fields to become visible. Bourdieu provided lengthy ethnographic discussions on how class-specific lifestyle preferences are functional within the occupational experiences of different classes (e.g., the emphasis on bodily strength of working-class men). Thus, he acknowledged that workplace experiences partly determine the development of lifestyle preferences. Nevertheless, he emphasized that these tastes are transmitted within the family, which leads to an endless reproduction of social classes within society.

A number of critiques have emerged on the social reproduction model of Bourdieu. First, there is Bourdieu's concept of social class. The abstract discussion of social class as determined by the capital composition in the household is followed by an empirical ad hoc classification of professional groups defined by the French national statistical institute aslower, middle, and upper classes (Bennett, Emmison, and Frow 1999). Bourdieu mapped lifestyle preferences to different occupational groups to define social classes, but he was not able to clearly distinguish what aspects of social class are definitive in the formation of class-specific lifestyle preferences (Lareau and Conley 2008). His concept of a deterministic habitus is not compatible with his own practical theory, which emphasizes everyday interactions to understand the maintenance of social stratification (King 2000).

In line with this argument, Collins (1989, 2000) criticized Bourdieu for trying to explain the development of taste patterns at the micro level from a macro-sociological perspective. He argued that the occupational categories Bourdieu used in his quantitative analysis to demarcate different status groups are too abstract. They represent a fixed hierarchy of social stratification, which is not capable of explaining processes of social stratification at the micro level. The reproduction theory of Bourdieu is too much a machine-like mechanism that pays no attention to how cultural capital is applied in everyday interactions (Collins 2004). Collins agreed with Bourdieu that class position in society will influence the development of class-specific lifestyles, but he emphasized that they are the result of actual organizational power and status processes that characterize workplace interactions.

Bourdieu has also been criticized for not giving enough attention to gender processes (Christin 2012; Reay 2004; Ridgeway 1997). Bourdieu (1984, 2001) acknowledged that women have a stronger aesthetic taste pattern than men in the areas of food and clothing, and he explained this by referring to the position of women in the traditional male breadwinner household. The occupational status of the father determines the social class of the household and the mother only mediates in the reproduction of social class through the conversion of the male economic capital into symbolic capital, which in turn determines the habitus of the children in the household. For Bourdieu, this was a sufficient explanation for the stronger adherence to aesthetic taste patterns among women. However, the number of women who are active in the labor force has risen sharply since the 1960s (Woodward 2004) and the theoretical framework of Bourdieu does not pay any attention to the possible effects of female employment on the development of lifestyle preferences. According to Collins, the differential positions of men and women in the labor market offer a second explanation for gender differences in lifestyle preferences. In his article "Women and Men in the Class Structure," he explicitly formulated a number of hypotheses about interactional power and status dynamics in male and female jobs that could be influential on lifestyle preferences (Collins 1988). These hypotheses are based on micro-sociological observations that have empirical primacy in his sociological research (Collins 2000). However, he derived very general hypotheses about the effect of power processes on the workplace on lifestyle preferences.

Randall Collins: The Power and Status Dimension in Workplace Interactions

Collins (1975, 1988, 1992) formulated his hypotheses on the effect of occupational experiences on lifestyle preferences from the perspective of conflict sociology. He emphasized that class-based lifestyle preferences are enacted in everyday interaction rituals, where power and status processes constantly link the domain of social class to the domain of lifestyle preferences. In his emphasis on conflict as one of the driving forces behind social processes, Collins focused on authoritative and subordinate positions of social actors in local micro-sociological interactions. These distributions of authority positions become very tangible in workplace interactions, where there is a clear distinction between order givers and order takers. For Collins, these interactions that involve giving and taking orders are highly significant social behaviors, because they carry a strong ritualistic component. There is focused attention on the person in the authority position,

a clear social boundary between the person who gives orders and the person who takes orders, and there are highly scripted behaviors, where the order giver can expect deference from the order taker (Collins 2004). These occupational experiences will lead to differences in behavior, attitudes, and lifestyle preferences that extend beyond the workplace.

For Collins (1988, 2000), the experiential differences between order givers and order takers can explain the different lifestyle patterns within the social structure He argues that these micro-interactionist processes (of giving and taking orders) have conceptual priority in sociology but they can lead to aggregated trends that are visible at the macro level (Collins 2000). From this perspective, he formulates some general hypotheses on the gendered effect of giving and taking orders on lifestyle preferences.

People who give orders identify with the organizational ideals in which orders are considered justified as they are given by someone with the superordinate position in workplace interactions. This leads to an identification with a person's formal position and the status symbols that are associated with this position (Collins 1988). Therefore, order givers will develop a lifestyle that allows them to present their formal position in everyday interactions. Thus, we can expect that they will develop the lifestyle preferences that Bourdieu associated with the upper classes in society (Collins 2004). However, people in a dominated position in the formal interaction ritual will become cynically critical toward formal status symbols and they will develop a specific "working-class" lifestyle that resents the formal status symbols of the upper class.

Omar Lizardo (2011) used the framework of Collins to test the effects of authority positions on participation in "highbrow" cultural events, which are seen as an expression of adherence to formal cultural expressions. He concluded that people who give orders participate more in status-giving activities while those who follow instructions show lower participation rates, which is in line with the arguments presented by Collins. We extend these hypotheses to everyday taste patters in food and clothing. An exotic, broad taste in food and a fashionable taste in clothing are highly visible expressions of an aesthetic taste during interaction rituals, which is a crucial concern for people in authority positions. Order takers, however, will not only become cynically critical toward formal status symbols, they will also develop a specific "working-class" lifestyle (Collins 1988, 1992; Halle 1984). They will reject the formal, aesthetic culture of the dominant class, and in line with Bourdieu, we expect that this working-class lifestyle is characterized by a strong preference for local food and a practical taste in clothing.

Collins assumed that this development of a working-class lifestyle among people in subordinate positions would be especially prevalent among males, because they are usually employed in blue-collar jobs. This type of work is described as backstage labor, where the only relevant formal interactions are with superiors who give instructions that the workers have to carry out. This leads to a dominated backstage personality that resents the formal culture of superiors (Collins 1988, 1992). Working-class women, however, are usually employed in white-collar jobs. They also have to follow instructions from their superiors, but these jobs still require a great deal of "frontstage work" or "Goffmanian labor," such as interactions with clients or customers of the organization, or direct contact with a wide range of people within the organization. Examples of these jobs are secretaries, nurses, sales clerks, flight attendants, and other jobs that are almost exclusively occupied by women (Anker 1998). This type of frontstage work leads to frontstage personality traits that are characterized by self-indoctrination, self-idealization, and formal manners (Collins 2004). Therefore, the relevant lifestyle preferences will be characterized by a culture of respectability, where first-line impression management is important, which in turns leads to a more aesthetic taste pattern. Therefore, Collins expected the gender difference in food and clothing preferences to be especially prevalent among people in subordinate positions. When these hypotheses are applied to the taste patterns distinguished by Bourdieu, we expect that men will develop a taste of necessity and women will develop a more aesthetic taste pattern when they are in a subordinate position.

Hypotheses

This provides us with some interesting new hypotheses about how power differences in occupational experiences (giving or taking orders) determine the development of the boundary tastes that Bourdieu described. A cosmopolitan and broad taste in food and a fashionable taste in clothing are highly visible status symbols that are closely linked to self-presentation, which is a crucial concern for people in superordinate positions. Therefore, we expect that these taste preferences will be stronger among people who give orders, whereas a practical taste in clothing and a conventional taste in food will be stronger among people who follow instructions.

Furthermore, we also expect that gender will be a strong determinant of these taste preferences and that it will moderate the effect of following instructions. Women can be expected to have a stronger aesthetic taste pattern because of their symbolic status position in general, while a conventional and practical taste in food and clothing will be more associated with men. Because giving orders always requires status or "frontstage" work (for both men and women), we do not expect a large gender difference among people in superordinate positions.

These hypotheses could function as a useful refinement of the stratification model of Bourdieu. However, we still expect that his general stratification model will hold, as well as the effect of occupational experiences. Therefore, we expect that education level (institutionalized cultural capital) and economic capital will also be important determinants of taste patterns in food and clothing. This brings us to the following five hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: Cultural capital is positively related to a fashionable taste in clothing and a broader, exotic taste in food, and negatively related to a practical taste in clothing and a conventional taste in food.
Hypothesis 2: Economic capital is positively related to a fashionable taste in clothing and a broader, exotic taste in food, and negatively related to a practical taste in clothing and a conventional taste in food.
Hypothesis 3: Women have a more fashionable taste in clothing and a broader, exotic taste in food, and men have a more practical taste in clothing and a conventional taste in food.
Hypothesis 4: Both men and women in superordinate positions have a more fashionable taste in clothing and a broader, exotic taste in food than men and women who are not in a superordinate position.
Hypothesis 5: Men in a subordinate position have a more conventional taste in food and a practical taste in clothing while women in a subordinate position have a more fashionable taste in clothing and a broader, exotic taste in food.

Data and Measurements

To test our hypotheses, we use data from the survey "Cultural Participation in Flanders 2003–2004." This data set consists of 2,849 randomly selected Flemish respondents (from the Flemish National register) aged between 14 and 85 who were interviewed using computer-assisted face-to-face interviewing (with a response rate of 61 percent). After deleting cases with missing values on the variables used in our analyses, we selected a data set comprising 2,794 cases. The respondents were asked about their cultural participation patterns, taste preferences, and background characteristics. First, we present a factor analysis that reveals two different taste patterns in food and two different taste patterns in clothing. Then, we use a multiple regression model with interaction terms to test whether taste patterns in food and clothing differ for men and women in superordinate and subordinate positions. We discuss the parameter estimates of the multiple regression models with and without interaction terms. We also present the interaction effects in graphical form. These are the marginal mean scores for men and women in subordinate and superordinate positions for food and clothing preferences.

Table 1. Pattern Matrix of the Factor Solution for Food Preferences.

Likert Scale Items on Food Preferences	Broad taste	Conventional taste
I prefer conventional food	−0.29	**0.61**
I like trying out new recipes and flavors	**0.80**	0.02
First of all, a good meal means that you get enough on your plate	0.15	**0.63**
A steak with chips is still one of the best meals ever	0.02	**0.55**
I am interested in the way food is prepared in other cultures	**0.66**	0.00
Eating at home is still the best	0.01	**0.62**
It is not that important that a dish looks nice, as long as it tastes good	0.09	**0.37**
Going out to dinner is especially nice when I get to discover new dishes	**0.69**	0.16

Note. Factor loadings greater than 0.30 in absolute value are considered to be significant.
Note. Explained variance: 54 percent.

Dependent Variables

To capture the different taste preferences in food and clothing, we use a Likert-type scale with different statements about food and clothing. Our factor analysis (principal factor analysis with Promax rotation) identifies two distinct factors for each lifestyle domain.[1] The standardized factor scores on each dimension are used as our dependent variables.

Table 1 gives the results of the factor analysis for food preferences. We distinguish a factor for a conventional taste pattern and a factor for a broad, exotic taste pattern. For the conventional taste pattern, familiarity and quantity are important characteristics of the meal. Home-cooked meals are preferred and the aesthetic presentation of food is not very important. This taste pattern closely reflects the taste of necessity that Bourdieu described. The broad taste pattern is characterized by a curiosity for new recipes and flavors and a general interest in food from other cultures. This taste pattern reflects the cosmopolitan lifestyle orientation of the contemporary higher classes. We find a strong negative correlation between the two factors (−.56), which indicates that these are indeed opposing taste patterns.

For clothing preferences, we distinguish between a practical taste dimension and a fashion taste dimension (Table 2). A practical taste means an emphasis on decency and the practical use of clothing, which reflect the taste of necessity. A fashion taste is characterized by a preference for new clothing and a perceived link between identity and clothing. This is reflected in a stronger awareness of what other people think of a person's appearance. These are all characteristics of the aesthetic taste pattern. Again, we notice a strong negative correlation between the two factors (−.61), which indicates opposing taste preferences.

Independent Variables

For authority position at work, we use two separate dummy variables. The first one distinguishes respondents who give orders at work (yes or no) and the second variable distinguishes respondents who have to follow instructions at work (yes or no). By adding these two dummies together, we are able to distinguish the specific effects of both variables, while controlling for the possibility that someone might both follow instructions and give orders in their occupation. We also include respondents who are not working in our analysis. If it is true that the experience of giving or taking orders has a specific effect on food and clothing preferences, they should differ from the population who do not give or take orders, regardless of whether they work or not. We control

Table 2. Pattern Matrix of the Factor Solution for Clothing Preferences.

Likert Scale Items on Clothing Preferences	Fashion taste	Practical taste
I like spending money on clothes	**0.669**	−0.064
I like to buy new clothes each season	**0.702**	−0.078
Above all, clothing needs to be practical	0.146	**0.685**
My clothes should reflect my personality	**0.582**	0.099
My clothes have to be decent and nothing more	−0.164	**0.498**
I like to stand out with my outfit	**0.528**	−0.109
I like it when others compliment me on my clothing	**0.683**	0.137

Note. Factor loadings greater than 0.30 in absolute value are considered to be significant.
Note. Explained variance: 57 percent.

Table 3. *n* of Independent Variables.

Variables	Categories	*n*
Gender	Male	1,398
	Female	1,396
Age	14–29	723
	30–44	746
	45–60	687
	60+	638
Type of job	Manual worker	411
	Service worker	784
	Self-employed	227
	Not working	1,372
Give orders	No	2,353
	Yes	441
Take orders	No	1,511
	Yes	1,283
Years of schooling		2,794
Satisfaction with income		2,794

Table 4. *n* of Interaction Terms.

Interaction terms	*n*
Female × Order giving	128
Female × Not order giving	1,268
Male × Order giving	313
Male × Not order giving	1,085
Female × Order taking	560
Female × Not order taking	836
Male × Order taking	723
Male × Not order taking	675

for the specific effects of not working and the sector that the respondent is employed in. We distinguish between manual workers, service workers, self-employed workers, and respondents who are not active in the labor force.

Gender is included as a dichotomous variable (0 = male, 1 = female). We also use years of schooling and satisfaction with income (a 7-point scale) as indicators of cultural and economic capital. We want to test the specific effects of the experiences of giving orders and following instructions, which means that we need to control for the more general effects of these two types of capital. They are included as covariates in our model. It was not possible to include age as a continuous variable because the relationship with food preferences is not linear. Therefore, age is included as a categorical variable, which distinguishes between four age categories (14–29, 30–45, 46–60, and 60+).[2]

Results

We fit four separate multiple regression models with each factor score on the taste preferences as our dependent variables. Gender, age, type of job, giving orders, and taking orders are added as fixed factors, and years of schooling and satisfaction with income are added as covariates. In a second model, we also add two interaction terms: one for gender and giving orders and another for gender and following instructions. To interpret these interaction effects, we also compute the marginal mean scores of the preference factor scores for men and women in superordinate and subordinate positions based on the regression analysis. These are the mean scores averaged over the categories of the fixed factors in our analysis and the covariates are held constant (evaluation of income = 4.4 on a 7-point scale and years of schooling = 6.4). First, we present the results for food preferences (conventional and broad preferences), then we present the results for clothing preferences (practical and fashion preferences).

Food Preferences

Table 5 presents the results for food preferences. The R^2 is .24 for a conventional taste pattern and .11 for a broad taste pattern. This means we are able to explain, respectively, 24 and 11 percent of the variance in food preferences.

First, years of schooling has a significant negative effect on a conventional taste (−0.09) and a significant positive effect on a broad taste (0.05) in food. Second, satisfaction with income has a negative effect on a conventional taste (−0.04) and no effect on a broad taste in food. This indicates that greater prior cultural and economic capital are indeed associated with a broad taste and negatively associated with a conventional taste in food.

We also notice a very strong effect of age. The two middle-aged groups (between 30 and 60 years old) score significantly higher on a broad taste in food (0.18), while the older age group scores significantly lower (−0.26) compared with the younger age group. For a conventional taste in food, we see the opposite. The middle-aged groups score lower (−0.21 and −0.13) and the older age groups score higher (0.20) on a conventional taste pattern, compared with the youngest age group. Thus, the broad taste pattern is especially present in the middle-aged groups and the conventional taste pattern in the youngest and the oldest age groups.

We also find a strong gender difference, with women scoring higher on a broad food taste (0.22) and lower on conventional taste preferences in food (−0.28). These gender effects decline slightly when we add the interaction terms in our model (0.20 for a broad taste and −0.22 for a conventional taste), but they remain relatively large and significant. This indicates that the gendered experience of being in a superordinate or subordinate position offers a small, but not sufficient, explanation for the gender gap in food preferences.

A person's job sector does not have any significant effects on food preferences. Being in a superordinate position has a positive effect on broad food preferences (0.14) and a negative effect on conventional food preferences (−0.12). The interaction term in the second model between gender and giving orders is not significant for both food preferences, so we can conclude that the effects of giving orders on food preferences are the same for men and women.

Table 5. Parameter Estimates for a Conventional and Broad Taste Pattern in Food.

	Conventional taste		Broad taste	
Variables	*B* (*SE*)	*B* (*SE*)	*B* (*SE*)	*B* (*SE*)
Intercept	2.12 (0.11)***	2.10 (0.11)***	−0.96 (0.13)***	−0.95 (0.13)***
Gender				
Male				
Female	−0.28 (0.03)***	−0.22 (0.04)***	0.22 (0.03)***	0.20 (0.04)***
Age				
14–29				
30–44	−0.21 (0.04)***	−0.21 (0.04)***	0.18 (0.05)***	0.18 (0.05)***
45–59	−0.13 (0.04)**	−0.13 (0.04)**	0.18 (0.05)***	0.18 (0.05)***
60+	0.20 (0.04)***	0.20 (0.04)***	−0.26 (0.05)***	−0.26 (0.05)***
Years of schooling	−0.09 (0.01)***	−0.09 (0.01)***	0.05 (0.01)***	0.05 (0.01)***
Satisfaction with income	−0.04 (0.01)***	−0.05 (0.01)***	−0.02 (0.01)	−0.02 (0.01)
Type of job				
Manual worker	0.12 (0.09)	0.13 (0.09)	0.12 (0.10)	0.11 (0.10)
Service worker	−0.08 (0.09)	−0.04 (0.09)	0.10 (0.10)	0.09 (0.10)
Self-employed	−0.07 (0.08)	−0.04 (0.08)	0.04 (0.08)	0.03 (0.09)
Not working				
Give orders				
No				
Yes	−0.12 (0.04)**	−0.16 (0.06)**	0.14 (0.05)**	0.16 (0.06)**
Take orders				
No				
Yes	0.04 (0.08)	0.10 (0.08)	−0.08 (0.09)	−0.11 (0.09)
Female × Order giving		0.07 (0.09)		−0.05 (0.10)
Female × Order taking		−0.17 (0.06)**		0.07 (0.07)
R^2 (adjusted)	.24	.25	.11	.11

*p<0,05
**p<0,01
***p<0,001

Following instructions does not have a significant effect on either a conventional taste or a broad taste in food. However, in the models with interaction terms, we find a significant negative interaction effect for a conventional taste (−0.17) between gender and following instructions, which indicates that women in a subordinate position score significantly lower on a conventional taste in food compared with men who are in a subordinate position. The interaction term does not have a significant effect on a broad food taste. This means that women in a subordinate position score significantly lower on a conventional taste, but not higher on a broad, exotic taste in food.

These differences between men and women in superordinate and subordinate positions are also present when we look at the marginal mean scores on food preferences. Figure 1 shows the marginal mean scores for a conventional taste in food for men and women who do not give orders (no) and who give orders (yes), with 95 percent confidence intervals. When the confidence intervals do not overlap, the marginal mean scores differ significantly. Here, we see that both men and women score lower on a conventional taste pattern when they give orders (which was also indicated by the negative effect of giving orders and the absence of an interaction effect between gender and giving orders for a conventional taste preference in Table 1). Also, the gender difference is significant in both groups (not giving order or giving orders).

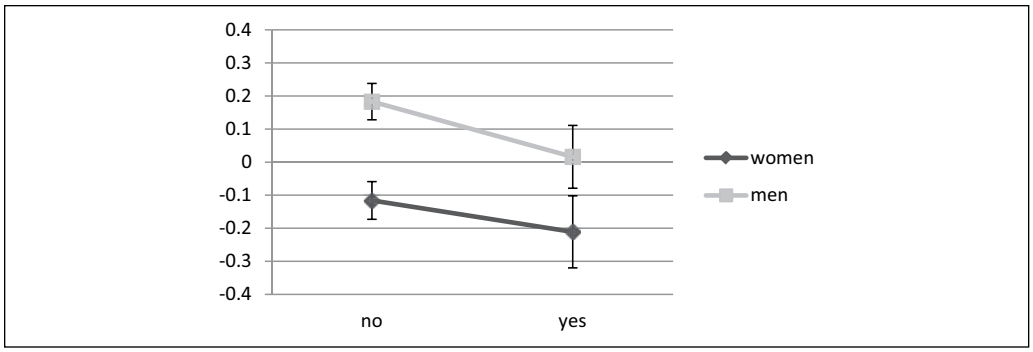

Figure 1. Marginal mean scores on a conventional taste pattern in food for men and women in an order-giving position.

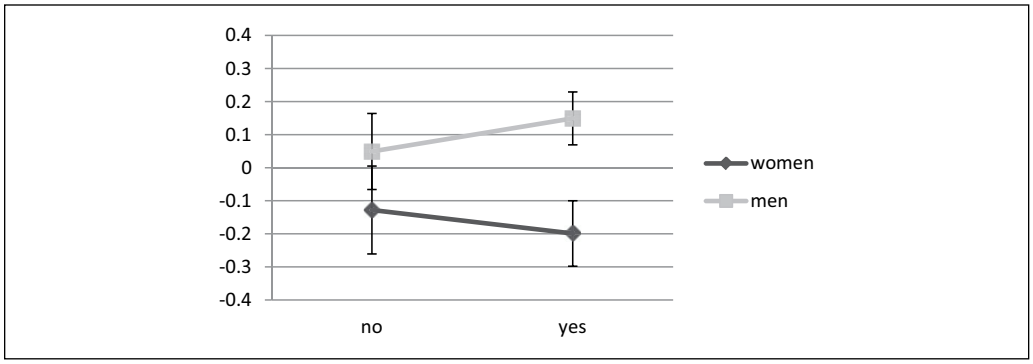

Figure 2. Marginal mean scores on a conventional taste pattern in food for men and women in an order-taking position.

In Figure 2, we see that the effect of following instructions on a conventional taste pattern differs for men and women. Men score higher on a conventional taste pattern and women score lower on this taste pattern when they are in a subordinate position. This results in a significant gender difference among people in a subordinate position, while this difference is not present for persons who are not in a subordinate position.

Figures 3 and 4 show that an opposite gender difference is present for a broad taste pattern. Figure 3 shows that women score higher on a broad taste pattern and both men and women score higher on this taste pattern when they give orders. The gender difference is no longer significant among people in a superordinate position, but this can be explained by the larger confidence intervals among this group because of the relatively low proportion of people who give orders in our sample ($N = 441$).

Figure 4 shows that the effect of being in a subordinate position on a broad taste pattern differs again for men and women. Only men score lower on a broad taste pattern when they follow instructions at work. Again, this results in a significant gender difference among people in a subordinate position, which is not present among people who are not in this position. Thus, these results are in line with our expectations: people in a superordinate position score lower on a conventional taste pattern and higher on a broad taste pattern. Among people in a subordinate position, men score higher on a conventional taste pattern, which is not the case for women.

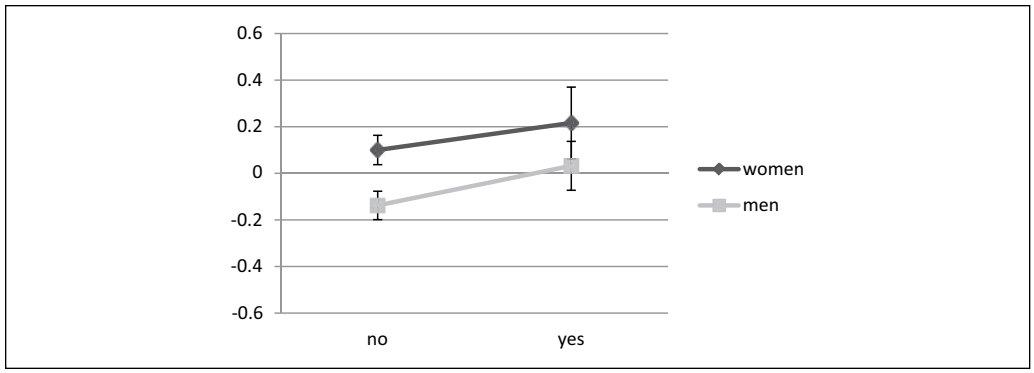

Figure 3. Marginal mean scores on a broad taste pattern in food for men and women in an order-giving position.

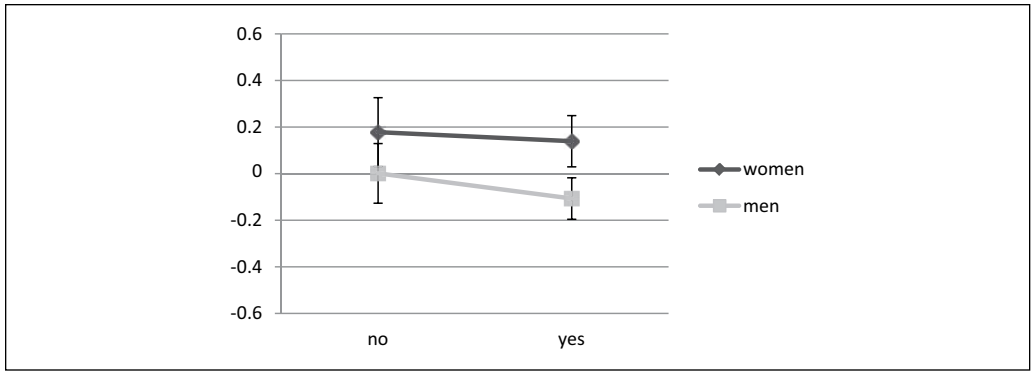

Figure 4. Marginal mean scores on a broad taste pattern in food for men and women in an order-taking position.

Clothing Preferences

Table 6 presents the results for practical and fashion taste preferences in clothing. The R^2 is .16 for a practical taste pattern and .23 for a fashion taste in clothing, which means we can explain, respectively, 16 percent of variance in practical and 23 percent of variance in fashion taste patterns in clothing.

Years of schooling has a negative effect on a practical taste in clothing (−0.04) and a positive effect on a fashion taste in clothing (0.02). Satisfaction with income has similar effects: a negative effect on a practical taste (−0.02) and a positive effect on a fashion taste (0.03). Therefore, both cultural and economic capital have an effect on clothing preferences.

Age has a strong effect on both clothing preferences and these effects are more or less linear. The youngest age group scores highest on a fashion taste in clothing, the middle-aged groups score lower (−0.42 and −0.45), and the oldest age group scores lowest on a fashion taste in clothing (−0.60). However, the oldest age group scores highest on a practical taste in clothing (0.57) compared with the youngest age group. The middle-aged groups also score higher (0.30 and 0.38), but to a lesser degree.

Gender has a large and significant effect, with women scoring lower on practical taste preferences (−0.32) and higher on fashion taste preferences (0.72) in clothing. These effects become somewhat smaller when we add the interaction terms, but they remain large and significant. Again, we have to conclude that occupational experiences offer a small, but not sufficient, explanation for the gender difference in clothing preferences.

Table 6. Parameter Estimates for a Practical and Fashion Taste Pattern in Clothing.

	Practical taste		Fashion taste	
Variables	*B* (*SE*)	*B* (*SE*)	*B* (*SE*)	*B* (*SE*)
Intercept	0.62 (0.11)***	0.59 (0.11)***	−0.51 (0.12)***	−0.49 (0.12)***
Gender				
Male				
Female	−0.32 (0.03)***	−0.25 (0.04)***	0.72 (0.03)***	0.67 (0.04)***
Age				
14–29				
30–44	0.30 (0.04)***	0.30 (0.04)***	−0.42 (0.04)***	−0.41 (0.04)***
45–59	0.38 (0.04)***	0.37 (0.04)***	−0.45 (0.04)***	−0.45 (0.04)***
60+	0.57 (0.04)***	0.56 (0.04)***	−0.60 (0.05)***	−0.60 (0.05)***
Years of schooling	−0.04 (0.01)***	−0.04 (0.01)***	0.02 (0.01)***	0.02 (0.01)***
Satisfaction with income	−0.02 (0.01)*	−0.02 (0.01)*	0.03 (0.01)**	0.03 (0.01)**
Type of job				
Manual worker	0.09 (0.09)	0.10 (0.09)	−0.01 (0.09)	−0.01 (0.10)
Service worker	−0.04 (0.09)	−0.01 (0.09)	−0.01 (0.09)	−0.04 (0.10)
Self-employed	−0.02 (0.07)	0.00 (0.07)	−0.01 (0.08)	−0.03 (0.08)
Not working				
Give orders				
No				
Yes	−0.06 (0.04)	−0.05 (0.05)	0.08 (0.05)	0.10 (0.06)
Take orders				
No				
Yes	0.03 (0.08)	0.07 (0.08)	0.01 (0.08)	−0.04 (0.09)
Female × Order giving		−0.09 (0.09)		−0.02 (0.09)
Female × Order taking		−0.13 (0.06)*		0.12 (0.07)**
R^2 (adjusted)	.16	.16	.23	.23

* p<0,05
** p<0,01
*** p<0,001

A person's job sector has no significant effect on clothing preferences. Giving orders also does not have a significant effect on either a practical or a fashion taste in clothing, and the interaction term in our second model is also not significant. Thus, being in a superordinate position does not have a significant effect on clothing preferences for men or women. Following instructions also has no significant main effect, but the interaction effect in the second model is significant for both clothing preferences. This interaction effect is negative for a practical taste in clothing (−0.13) and positive for a fashion taste in clothing (0.12). This indicates that the gender gap for clothing preferences is greater among people in subordinate positions, with women scoring lower on a practical taste in clothing and higher on a fashion taste in clothing.

This pattern also arises when we look at the marginal mean scores on clothing preferences for men and women in order-giving or order-taking positions (Figures 5–8). These figures resemble the figures for food preferences but the gender differences are much larger. Women always score significantly lower on a practical taste pattern and significantly higher on a fashion taste pattern in clothing. Again, men and women who give orders score lower on a practical taste pattern (Figure 5) and higher on a fashion taste pattern in clothing (Figure 7). We also see a larger gender difference among people who follow instructions, with women scoring lower and men scoring higher on a practical taste pattern (Figure 6). There is no difference for a fashion taste in clothing

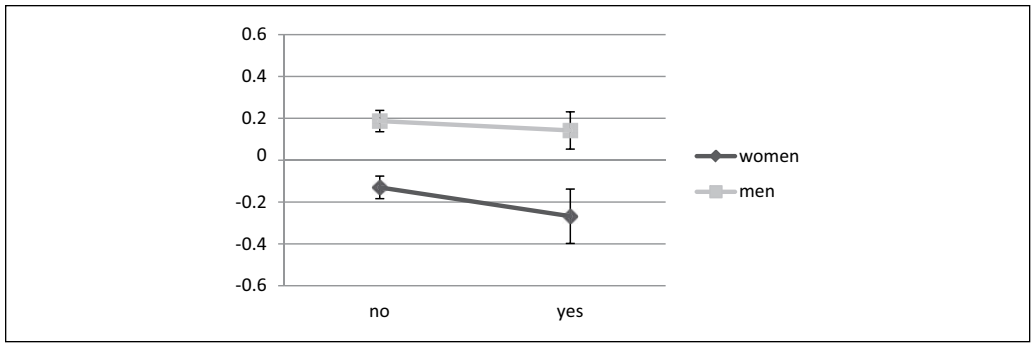

Figure 5. Marginal mean scores on a practical taste pattern in clothing for men and women in an order-giving position.

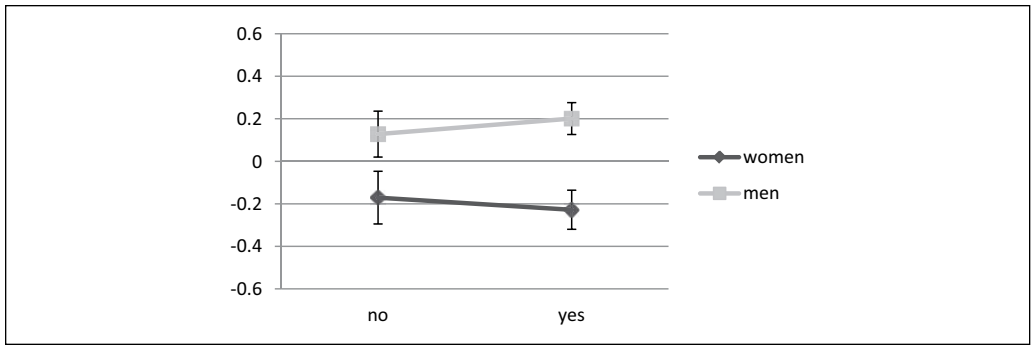

Figure 6. Marginal mean scores on a practical taste pattern in clothing for men and women in an order-taking position.

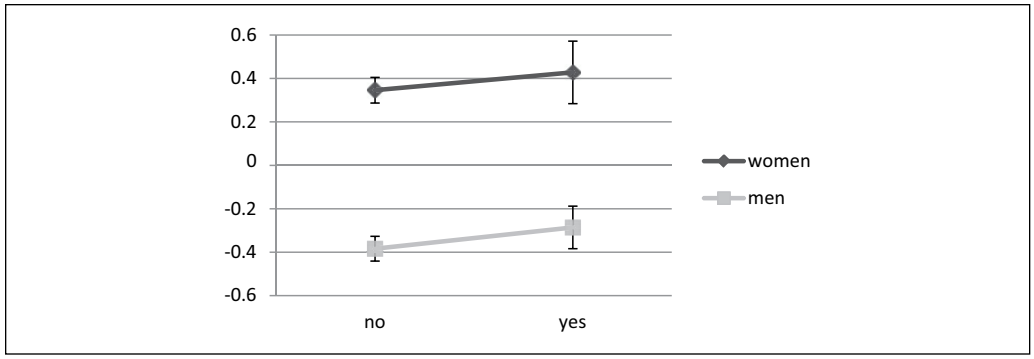

Figure 7. Marginal mean scores on a fashion taste pattern in clothing for men and women in an order-giving position.

in the taste pattern for men who follow instructions (compared with men who do not follow instructions). Women score higher on a fashion taste when they follow instructions, which widens the gender gap in this group (Figure 8). Again, this is in line with our expectations: people in a superordinate position score higher on a fashion taste in clothing, women in a subordinate

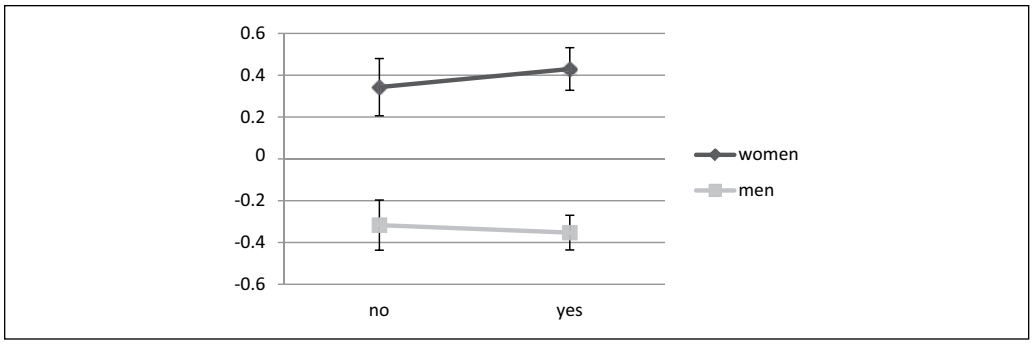

Figure 8. Marginal mean scores on a fashion taste pattern in clothing for men and women in an order-taking position.

position score higher on a fashion taste in clothing while men in subordinate positions score higher on a practical taste in clothing.

Discussion and Conclusion

In this article, we integrate specific insights from the experiential stratification model of Collins into the more general social stratification model of Bourdieu to explain lifestyle preferences in the areas of food and clothing. Both authors emphasized the link between occupational experiences and lifestyle preferences, but their different perspectives lead to different hypotheses about this link. Although Bourdieu (1977) rejected the strict functionalist perspective, he still described how lifestyle preferences are transmitted within the family and the education system because they are functional within the different work conditions of lower- and upper-class families (Bourdieu 1984). The working class emphasizes bodily strength and functionality in their preferences for food and clothing, while the upper class emphasizes aesthetic criteria and novelty. Collins starts from a conflict model to explain the stratification of lifestyles and he suggests that people in a superordinate position identify with the formal aesthetic culture, while people (especially men) in a subordinate position will reject this aesthetic culture and develop a specific working-class culture. Therefore, the practical and local taste of the working class might not only reflect the taste of necessity that Bourdieu describes, it can also indicate a culture of resistance to the aesthetic taste patterns of the upper class.

We do find these distinct taste patterns in our results. For food preferences, we find a more traditional taste pattern that emphasizes the familiarity and quantity of a meal and a broader, more exotic taste pattern that emphasizes new flavors and an interest in food in different cultures. For clothing, we observe a distinction between a practical taste and a fashionable taste, which stresses the link between clothing and identity. The conventional taste pattern in food and the practical taste pattern in clothing fit the taste of necessity of the working class, and the broad taste in food and the fashion taste in clothing fit the aesthetic taste patterns of the upper classes that Bourdieu described. The structural homology argument of Bourdieu argued that these lifestyle patterns overlap with the position in social space, which is determined by the amount of economic and cultural capital held by an individual. We do find that taste patterns in food and clothing are related to education level and satisfaction with income, which argues in favor of the stratification model of Bourdieu (Hypotheses 1 and 2). Years of schooling has a positive link with aesthetic taste patterns and a negative link with necessity taste patterns in food and clothing. Sufficiency of income has a negative effect on necessity taste patterns in food and clothing and a positive effect on a fashion taste in clothing, but not on a broad taste

in food. This absence of a link between a broad taste in food and income, and the presence of link with education indicates that this taste pattern is especially related to cultural capital, while a fashion taste in clothing (which is a form of luxury consumption) is also related to economic capital. However, we must note we do not use a direct measurement of economic capital. We use an evaluation of the sufficiency of income as a proxy and this could also explain the smaller effects of economic capital.

Collins emphasized that occupational experiences and workplace interactions in themselves have an impact on lifestyle preferences. He formulated some explicit expectations about the (gendered) effect of being in a subordinate or superordinate position, which are partly confirmed in our analyses. Giving orders is related to food preferences and not to clothing preferences (Hypothesis 4). It is associated with a broad food taste, while the conventional taste pattern is less popular. This indicates that food preferences are a better marker than clothing preferences with regard to the lifestyle of people in a superordinate position. A broad, exotic taste pattern in food could have an instrumental advantage for people in a position of authority, because a broad interest in different areas (such as food) makes for flexibility in communication with partners in different social contexts, which is a highly valued characteristic for managers (Erickson 1991, 1996). Collins also points out another trend that can explain why a superordinate position is related to food preferences, but not clothing preferences. He notes that "most of the situations have disappeared in which class based status groups can be enacted, and the situations that are left are withdrawn into privacy, where they no longer give emblems to membership" (Collins 2004, pp. 295-296)). This trend has been described as an informalization process, where public expressions of superiority and inferiority have become tabooed, and self-expression of inner authenticity has become a new sign of good taste, which led to an informalization of manners (Wouters 2007). Collins (2009) was critical of the concept of informalization but agreed with the idea that status competition has become more hidden. Food preferences are a more "silent marker" of social class (expressed in the private sphere) and therefore able to function as an informal sign of a superordinate position.

Clothing, however, is used for public self-representation and therefore no longer an appropriate tool to express one's formal position. Also current fashion ideals emphasize youth individuality and sexuality, and these attributes are not necessarily highly valued in business cultures and management circles. Furthermore, fashion is strongly related to the feminine realm and has no place in business organizations (Davidson and Burke 1994). Female order givers might be guided to conform to this male-dominated culture, which could explain why the gender gap is not larger among people in superordinate positions.

Being in a subordinate position has no effect by itself on preferences in food and clothing. However, we do find a larger gender gap among people who follow instructions, which is in line with the stratification model of Collins (Hypothesis 5). Women who follow instructions score lower on conventional food taste and practical clothing taste, and significantly higher on a fashion taste in clothing compared with men who follow instructions. It is interesting to note that food preferences are more relevant for people in superordinate positions, and clothing preferences for women in subordinate positions. This greater interest in fashion clothing among women in subordinate positions provides a strong indication that frontstage performance is especially relevant among this group. Clothing might be more relevant for women, because their appearance functions as a specific female resource in workplace interactions (Ross-Smith and Huppatz 2010). This resource is more functional in female working-class jobs than in male-oriented managerial jobs. Women in subordinate positions also score lower on the typically male working-class lifestyle preferences. They score lower on conventional food preferences and lower on a practical taste in clothing compared with men in subordinate positions. Overall, the taste pattern of women in subordinate positions is more closely related to the taste pattern of order givers than that of men in subordinate positions. This provides support for Collins' claim that the gender gap in

lifestyle preferences can partly be explained by the differences in occupational positions of men and women.

Some additional remarks need to be made with regard to these results. First, we find that the gender gap in food and clothing preferences is not only present among order takers but among all respondents (Hypothesis 3). Both Collins and Bourdieu explained this higher prevalence as being due to the symbolic work women have to perform within a family context. Collins extended this argument to the labor market, where women are also mostly employed in Goffmanian labor, which includes symbolic labor. Therefore, to comprehend fully the stronger aesthetic preferences of women in this model, we would need a clear indicator for this diffuse and often hidden symbolic labor in different contexts. It is not possible to determine whether the more aesthetic tasted of women in a subordinate position are directly caused by their greater involvement in Goffmanian labor and the greater importance of self-presentation in female jobs. Collins (1988) provided us with a number of examples on how Goffmanian labor is more important for women in subordinate positions which led him to formulate some general hypotheses on the gendered effect of taking orders on lifestyle preferences. We can only test these general hypotheses without taking the micro-processes of differential occupational experiences of men and women into account. In addition, our concept of giving and taking orders is a rather crude concept of the fine-grained interaction processes that take place between order givers and order takers in the workplace. Again, to obtain generalizable statistical results that present broader stratification processes, we need broader categories that give an indication of these types of interactions. The distinction between order givers and order takers proves to be a useful conceptualization in this respect.

Second, we need to address the question of causality in our models: Are lifestyle preferences mainly determined by the prior acquired cultural capital (the habitus) that is needed to obtain order-giving positions, or do order-giving positions themselves have an influence on lifestyle preferences? This remains an open issue, because we do not have longitudinal data to test this. However, as Lizardo (2011) noted, the argument for reversed causation (lifestyle preferences cause occupational positions) relies on a stronger set of assumptions than the explanation offered by Collins. Furthermore, the concept of an all-determining habitus is not compatible with Bourdieu's own theory of social practice (King 2000). In this latter theory, social life is described as the mutually negotiated network of interactions and practices between individuals within social fields and social struggles are an integral part of these interactions (Bourdieu 1989; King 2000). Bourdieu noted that the deployment of symbolic capital (of which taste patterns are an important element) is always dependent on its strategic use in these social struggles (Bourdieu 1984, 1988; Holt 1997). Work organizations are a specific field, and our results indicate that different types of symbolic capital are used by men and women in subordinate and superordinate positions. This indicates that the experiential stratification model of Collins has some potential contributions to make in more general stratification research. In particular, expanding Collins' hypotheses on the gendered effect of following instructions by adding a status dimension in his model provides some interesting paths for further research. The focus on the difference between the occupational experiences of men and women has been widely discussed, but there have been almost no attempts to operationalize this in quantitative research on social stratification outcomes (such as lifestyles). Our results show that Collins' framework has the potential to explore the effects of these gendered occupational experiences. This way, micro- and macro-sociological research can benefit from each other to unravel the specific mechanisms of social stratification.

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Notes

1. The Promax rotation is used because we assume there is a correlation between the taste factors of each lifestyle domain. As we are looking for boundary tastes, we assume that a strong adherence to one taste pattern implies a rejection of the other taste pattern, which would lead to a negative correlation between taste patterns.
2. The relationship with clothing preferences is linear but we still use the age categories to make the analysis comparable.

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